

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3331

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 2167

EXDIS

FOR SISCO FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, PFOR, TU

SUBJ: NEXT STEPS ON OPIUM ISSUE

REF: A. ANKARA 2014, B. STATE 56257

1. ESENBEL IS UNFORTUNATELY CORRECT WHEN HE SAYS CURRENT
POPPY BAN ISSUE HERE "IS NOT A QUESTION OF MORE MONEY."
I KNOW YOU ARE FAMILIAR, FROM MY EARLIER REPORTING, WHY
THIS IS PRESENTLY THE CASE. HOWEVER, I HAVE NOT RULED OUT
THE POSSIBILITY THAT DOWN THE ROAD THIS ISSUE CAN BE
RESOLVED THROUGH "MORE MONEY," LONG AS THE ODDS ARE
AGAINST SUCH A BASIS FOR SOLUTION AT THIS MOMENT.

2. DESPITE A CONSTANT STREAM OF PRESS ACCOUNTS TO THE
CONTRARY, WE HAVE BOUGHT SOME TIME, AND WHILE THE DECISION
TO RESUME POPPY CULTIVATION IS ALL BUT MADE, IT HAS NOT
ACTUALLY BEEN MADE AND HOPEFULLY WILL NOT BE FORMALLY AND
FINALLY CONSIDERED FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER FEW WEEKS.

3. DURING THESE FEW WEEKS, THE GOT OBVIOUSLY HOPES WE WILL
BECOME CONVINCED THAT RETURN TO POPPY CULTIVATION IS
INEVITABLE AND THAT WE WILL BECOME RECONCILED TO THIS THROUGH
THEIR GUARANTEE TO US THAT NEW CONTROL PROCEDURES WILL BE
FAR MORE EFFECTIVE THAN IN THE PAST. GOT WOULD LIKE TO SEE
THE DIALOGUE MOVE TO THE DISCUSSION OF CONTROLS AND TO AN
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EXPLORATION OF WHAT METHOD OF CONTROL WOULD GIVE US THE

KIND OF ASSURANCE WE NEED.

4. I AM ASSUMING HERE THAT USG STILL WISHES EMBASSY TO MAKE MAJOR EFFORT TO PREVENT ANY GROWING OF POPPIES AND, THEREFORE, WOULD REGARD IT AS UNWISE, AND CERTAINLY PREMATURE, FOR US TO BE PULLED INTO SUCH DISCUSSIONS AT THIS TIME. ON OTHER HAND, DIALOGUE WILL ALMOST INEVITABLY DRIFT IN THIS DIRECTION IF WE DO NOT COME UP WITH A COUNTER MOVE WHICH HAS SUCH SUFFICIENT AND OBVIOUS MERIT THAT GOT CANNOT, WITH SPOTLIGHT OF WORLD PUBLIC OPINION UPON THEM, REFUSE TO AT LEAST CAREFULLY CONSIDER IT. THE KIND OF ALTERNATIVE I OF COURSE HAVE IN MIND IS THE WORLD BANK PROPOSAL OUTLINED IN REFTEL A. AND IF WE CAN BUY TIME AND CALM SITUATION DOWN HERE I DO NOT COMPLETELY RULE OUT WISER HEADS EVENTUALLY PREVAILING, AND TURKEY OPTING FOR A RESOLUTION WHICH NOT ONLY AVOIDS STIGMA OF GOING BACK INTO THE POPPY BUSINESS, BUT ALSO OFFERS FAR BETTER LONG-TERM HOPE FOR ELEVATION OF FORMER POPPY FARMERS' LOT.

5. FOR THIS REASON, I AM DISAPPOINTED BY YOUR CONCLUSION (REFTEL B) THAT MANAMARA CANNOT BE PERSUADED TO TAKE MAJOR INITIATIVE IN ABSENCE OF TURK REQUEST, TO PUBLICIZE WORLD BANK WILLINGNESS TO LAUNCH TYPE OF EFFORT OUTLINED REFTEL A. AS SECOND BEST ALTERNATIVE, HOWEVER, I RECOMMEND THAT I BE AUTHORIZED TO GO TO THE GOT AFTER A FEW MORE DAYS OF CURRENT MUTUAL EYE-BALL TO EYE-BALL STANCE AND IN EFFECT MAKE FIRST REAL USG SUBSTANTIVE COUNTER MOVE IN CURRENT DIALOGUE. THIS WOULD CONSIST OF USG SAYING THAT AS RESULT OF IMPORTANCE THAT IT AND MUCH OF REST OF WORLD ATTACH TO MAINTENANCE OF POPPY BAN, BUT IN RECOGNITION ALSO OF SERIOUS CONCERN GOT HAS BROUGHT TO USG ATTENTION, USG LHAS APPROACHED WORLD BANK AND LEARNED THAT LATTER WOULD BE WILLING TO LEAD AND SUPPORT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT EFFORT IN FORMER POPPY-GROWING REGION. I WOULD ADD THAT IT IS USG IMPRESSION THAT WORLD BANK WOULD BE PREPARED TO INVOLVE VERY SUBSTANTIAL RESOURCES IN THIS EFFORT. I WOULD ALSO ADD THAT THIS EFFORT WOULD BE OFFERED, OF COURSE, ONLY IF GOT WISHED IT. I WOULD STRESS THAT IT WAS USG VIEW THAT IN LIGHT OF THIS, TURKEY NOW HAD AN ALTERNATIVE WHICH IS MUCH MORE DESIRABLE, FROM VIEWPOINT OF BOTH THE TURKISH

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FARMERS AND WORLD HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS, THAN THE RETURN TO POPPY CULTIVATION. AND I WOULD DURTHER STRESS THAT IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT SUCH ALTERNATIVE EXISTS, WE WOULD HOPE AND EXPECT THAT GOT WOULD EXAMINE IT WITH GREAT CARE.

6. SUCH A STATEMENT MIGHT INTRODUCE DEGREE OF MOBILITY INTO EYE-BALLING BOTH SIDES HAVE ENGAGED IN UP TO NOW. IT WOULD ALSO OPEN UP GOT TO CHARGES OF IRRESPONSIBILITY IF IT

DOES NOT AT LEAST STOP TO EXPLORE EXTENT OF POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THIS ALTERNATIVE. SUCH A MOVE MAY END UP SIMPLY BUYING US A LITTLE MORE TIME AND HAVE NO APPRECIABLE EFFECT ON THE END RESULT. ON OTHER HAND, CAREFUL EXAMINATION COULD POSSIBLY LEAD TO INCREASING GOT INTEREST IN THIS ALTERNATIVE.

7 THE ODDS ARE THAT THIS MOVE WILL NOT IN THE END BE SUCCESSFUL BUT IT THE BEST ONE AVAILABLE TO US AT THE MOMENT. WE ARE OF COURSE BEGIFING TO EXAMINE SOME FALL-BACK POSITIONS BUT UNLESS I RECIEVE GUIDANCE TO THE CONTRARYOU I WILL CONTINUE FOR THE PRESENT TO OPERATE HERE ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE DEPARTMENT WANTS THIS EMBASSY TO CONTINUE ON A TOP PRIORITY BASIS TO MAKE EVERY PRACTICABLE EFFORT TO HEAD OFF EVEN A LIMITED POPPY BAN RECISSION.

8. IN THIS LATTER CONNECTION I STRONGLY URGE THAT APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES IN CONGRESS BE FULLY BRIEFED AT ONCE (AND THEREFORE ON A CONTINUING BASIS) ON ALL DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS MATTER. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THEY NOT BE TAKEN BY SURPRISE BY A GOT DECISION LATER THIS SPRING TO RESCIND THE BAN. MEMBERS SHOULD BE FILLED IN ON THE SPECIFICS OF WHY TURKEY FEELS IMPELLED TO MOVE. THEY SHOULD ALSO BE DVIDED OF ALL THE ACTIONS AND ARGUMENTS THAT USG IS MAKING IN THE SITUATION. BEING CONSTANTLY FILLED IN ON THE STATE OF PLAY BETWEEN NOW AND THE TIME A DECISION IS MADE HERE WILL NOT OF COURSE HEAD OFF ALL OUR CONGRESSIONAL PROBLEMS BUT IT SHOULD HELP. IN ANY EVENT, FAILURE TO GET INVOLVED IN THESE CONSULTATIONS RIGHT AWAY(AND BEFORE FINAL DECISIONS ARE REACHED) COULD PRECIPITATE AN ADDED DEGREE OF CONGRESSIONAL BITTERNESS WE COULD WELL DO WITHOUT. DEPARTMENT MAY BE FAR AHEAD OF ME ON THIS LATTER, BUT IF NOT I URGE A CONTINUING EFFORT TO THIS KIND BE LAUNCHED SOONEST.
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